

REINCARNATION

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THE WAR'S RESULTS

It is an unspeakable relief to turn from the war's destructiveness and slaughter to the certain hope that lies before us in the regeneration of the world when the turmoil is ended and the nations can live side by side again without clutching at each other's throats.

Let us think of but one phase of the changes to come—that of the intercommunication between the world-parts. By sea things will probably be not very different except for the greater activity and freedom of travel and the far greater tendency of all the nations to co-operate with one another, with the thought in the foreground of the mind that service is to be happily rendered rather than that loot may be won.

As Lord Bryce points out in his study of South America, the world's possibilities of territorial expansion have reached their limit; the beating

waves of human longing for freer breath and for fresh soil for growing bread must recoil and roll back on ancient lands.

The British government has recently sent out a pamphlet by Canon Parfit, entitled *Mesopotamia, The Key To The Future*, in which he presents some thoughts, so near to expression for us all, concerning the land communications by rail and air-plane that ought to be made through the Eastern Hemisphere.

He draws attention to the fact that the rash ambition of German princes has not failed to seize the vision of England that pictured the old world united by rail-lines joining and traversing her three continents.

What hinders but men's jealousy that we should not travel by rail from Calais to Cape Town or Madras or Mandalay quite as we do from Calais to Vladivostock? The times seem ripe for the effort, just as the times are ripe for a continuous railway from Alaska to Terra del Fuego.

Since the beginning of the war Germany has built a line from Palestine to the Egyptian frontier. Of this Canon Parfit speaks as follows:

Since the outbreak of war the Germans have completed a new line of railway through Palestine to the Egyptian frontier, and we also have constructed a railway across the Sinaitic Desert to Palestine. There is no doubt, therefore, that the Cape-to-Cairo railway will soon be connected with the great European and Asiatic systems by a line running through Palestine to Aleppo. Then the old "Silk Street" route, so recently explored by Sir Aurel Stein, will doubtless be covered more or less with a railway system; and we may consequently anticipate the joining up of rapid communications over these many ancient highways, in practically a straight line from London to India and Australia, from Paris to Pekin, and from

Petrograd to the Cape. All these will pass through Aleppo, now the headquarters of Germany's Bagdad railway schemes, which makes it a matter of vital interest and concern to the millions of the British Empire that Germany's attempts to destroy our shipping coincide with her effort to grasp by force of arms the most important lines of overland communications. It must not be forgotten that these direct overland routes will assume still greater importance with the establishment of aviation stations. We are making wondrous strides in aerial navigation, and when recent inventions are diverted to peaceful purposes it will be possible, we are told, to send mails and passengers from London to India in three days by aerial navigation in practically a straight line. Lord Montagu suggested a route across Russia to the Punjab, but it is more probable that aviation stations will be established across the continent of Europe and down the Euphrates Valley. If the journey will take but three days from London to India, with plenty of time for rest and sleep on the way, may it not soon be possible for our colonial representatives of the contemplated Imperial Parliament to come within a week from the shores of Australia to the portals of Westminster? These tremendous changes which are now taking place amongst civilised peoples make it certain that the central portion of the Eastern Hemisphere, which forms a natural connecting link between the three continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, will undoubtedly become one of the most important portions of the earth's surface. These changes will facilitate the opening up of enormous countries hitherto largely closed to modern commercial enterprise or exploited only by a few adventurous Europeans. The vast populations of Asia and Africa will be able to play a better part in the development of the continents and the progress of humanity. There is plenty of room for everybody; and what a difference it may make to Europe, with the new facilities afforded to emigration and colonisation, when the Antipodes can be brought so near to the congested areas of European lands!

Famines are now-a-days caused, not so much

by lack of sufficient bread for all men as by failure to transport food to those in need. Poverty is chiefly due to lack of incentive to activity, to the failure of foresight and to that deficiency of human co-operation which, up to the present time, prevents those who have idle hands from fashioning those goods which their brothers, perhaps of a remote clime or race, would be glad to pay for in products of their own.

The needs of civilization demand imperatively the greatest freedom of co-operation, the maximum of interchange in all conceivable ways. Electric wires bear thoughts, freighters transmit material goods and express trains bear men from land to land. The law of civilization calls for circulation, for intercommunication over the world as in the days of the Phoenicians, who sailed the ancient Mediterranean and ventured around the wild shores of Africa. We seem to be in sight of the most profound and beneficent changes in the material life of the world.

W. V-H.

CHANNELS

Those who study the Wisdom Religion find, now and then, a reference to channels. A channel seems to be a person who is so physically, astrally and mentally clean, that certain of the finer beneficent forces of nature may be sent through him without contamination. This demands a degree of purity so high that it is attained with difficulty and can only be kept up by the most constant and painstaking care.

We know that a crooked and dirty mirror does not reflect a true and clear image, nor will a dull and distorted lens converge the sun's rays to a perfect and effective focus. Both, to be effective, must be clean and perfect. In the same way a channel must be clean and perfect so that none of the force sent through him may be obstructed or distorted. The analogy may be carried one step further. As the perfect image from the mirror and the perfect focus from the lens are not for the benefit of mirror or lens, so the forces sent through a channel are not for the benefit of the channel but for another.

We are told very little or nothing as to the mode of sending forces through a channel. Being interested in the subject, I once asked some direct questions in regard to the manner in which forces were sent through a person who could be used in this way. I was told in no uncertain way that this information was not for me; that this knowledge was revealed only to those who had advanced some considerable distance along the path.

On reflection we can see that this knowledge places great power for evil as well as good in the hands of one who knows how to use it, and would never be given by those who have the good of humanity at heart without an ample guarantee against its misuse. As with other occult forces, one must reach a certain definite point in the evolutionary scheme before being entrusted with this knowledge.

It must not be thought that one used as a channel fails to receive any benefit because the forces sent through him are used for others.

Quite the contrary is true. A channel is a definite and indispensable link in an occult chain reaching from higher planes to lower ones, and one who can assist in this way the Higher Ones who direct these forces may rest assured that They are never ungrateful.

It may seem strange that one may be used as a channel and be entirely unconscious of it, but such appears to be the fact.

Those who have read *At the Feet of the Master* and some other similar books will remember the great stress laid on personal cleanliness. Some sorts of uncleanness are accompanied by quite bad magnetism, and this—and also the effect on the body of such food as onions—may well render a possible channel quite offensive to the higher entity wishing to use it. It is quite possible that the use of tobacco has the same effect.

I was once told of an actual occurrence that well illustrates the necessity for careful regard in these matters. A certain person who was in training for higher service under the direction of an older student, had, while examining some machinery, gotten his feet rather dirty from the mineral oil which was used as a lubricant and which had been allowed to remain on the floor. The older student was at once notified from higher sources that the feet of the younger student must be cleansed and that in the future he must exercise more care in the supervision of his charge and not allow the body of the younger to be contaminated, even momentarily, by anything whatsoever.

This special case may have nothing to do with the use of the younger student as a channel but it does show the importance attached to personal cleanliness by those who can see the effects of contact with unclean substances.

To fit oneself deliberately for use as a channel, would undoubtedly require much of sacrifice on all three of the lower planes of being and much hard work, but the reward would be a good karma and so a better body for such work in the next incarnation.

Wm. Brinsmaid.

CHRISTMAS

Once a year there comes the mystic Christmas season to remind men of the Wondrous Babe of Salvation, born in the manger, surrounded by the beasts of the field. Christmas has many meanings, and every man may find in the story of the Christ-child just what he is ready and able to grasp and understand.

The time of Christmas falls close to the winter solstice, when the sun, having reached his lowest position in the south, is turning on his long journey upward to bring another season of light and life to the people of northern lands,—so that astronomically Christmas may be regarded as the symbol of the sun's resurrection and new life.

To the Christian devotee the sacred story means the very life center of his religious hopes, for he looks upon the Christ as his redeemer and savior.

To the ordinary man of the world the time of Christmas is a season of happy thoughts and feelings for his friends and dear ones, with generous giving of material cheer to such as are in want of food and winter warmth. To such men the holiday means a time set apart for gladness and rejoicing, for exchanging gifts and sweet remembrances with his friends and relatives and dear ones. It is the time for good will to all men.

Historically considered, Christmas is the result of the transformation of the old Roman festival of the Saturnalia into one which could be controlled in outer form by the Christian Church.

Why do people find it so easy to be generous and happy at Christmas time? Is it not in part because in other lives on earth they have celebrated the Saturnalia and perhaps other festivals which were fore-runners of the modern Christian festival? Nearly all the races had festivals which had similar or the same significance. No doubt we have all celebrated such festivals many times before, and fall easily into the old customs.

But to the one who knows its deeper meaning the Christmas story tells of the awakening within his heart of the inner spirit life,—in very truth a birth of the child divine in a world of coarse material thoughts and feelings. It is the beginning of his true spiritual life, in which he is to grow to become at last a Christ and leader of his fellowmen, to help them break their karmic bonds.

Let all that know this deeper meaning hold it high in thought and longing, above the throngs of men, to bless and lead them on.

C. S.

WORDSWORTH'S "INTIMATIONS
OF IMMORTALITY"

The *Intimations of Immortality* of Wordsworth is full of that lingering tenderness of memory of the past which every heart of man reflects from the heart of our Father, God. For the most part the memories which the poet gilds with his fancy are those of the life which he was then living. But the stanza first to be quoted tells plainly of the egoic memories of antecedent lives.

We quote a part of the commentary of the poet on the work. Read both; see if you do not agree with us that Wordsworth sang out in the full tones of his very heart's truth in the poem, drivelling into a truckling apology to British religious prejudice when he recants in the prose exposition.

The second stanza tells what the Lord Buddha told—that Heaven is all about us, if we but knew.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us—our life's star—
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar,
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, Who is our home.
Heaven lies about us in our infancy;
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy;
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The youth who daily farther from the east
Must travel still is nature's priest.

And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

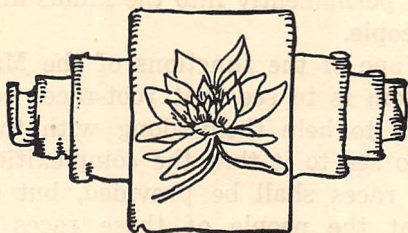
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Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated in something of the same way to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of mere processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines *Obstinate Questionings*, etc. To that dreamlike vividness and splendor which invests objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here; but having in the poem regarded it as a presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that though the idea is not

advanced in Revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of man presents an analogy in its favor. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the creed of many nations, and among all persons acquainted with classic literature is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the immortality of the soul, I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing me to make for my purpose the best use I could as a poet.

W. V-H.



THE GUIDANCE OF MEN

We get almost no proper notion of the meaning of human life unless we can endeavor to make a study of human life from the higher side. The purpose of human life for groups of men such as make up a civilization is that masses of egos, masses of human souls, shall incarnate under conditions that suit them for the particular period

concerned. The incarnated men shall be so grouped that their ancient karma shall be to some extent satisfied, so that the karma they are about to make shall be such as will happily interrelate them in the future, and so that the people shall live as joyously as possible. But at the same time they are to learn in common, in spite of the multiplicity of small activities, some universal lesson or series of lessons. Hence over and above the lower material thoughts of life certain sets of ideals are to be maintained above the people by the Great Brothers which they are to strive toward, which they are more or less to recognize and toward which they are to aspire with the hope that ultimately something of these ideals may sink permanently into the minds and hearts of the people.

Hence one of the functions of the Masters of the Wisdom is to see that root-races come into being and to help them along with the events of life, to see to it that the complexities of the types of races shall be provided, but infinitely more that the people of those races shall be cultured. If this is done they can grow in all kinds of marvelous ways. The egos live in bodies adapted to the uses of special periods and opportunities. The culture of the people, their uplifting from a lower to a higher level, even if, as it were, by only a fraction of an inch at a time, is always a supreme goal.

W. V.-H.

THE PILGRIMS' CHORUS

(From Wagner's "Tannhaeuser")

Birth, death, pain,
And then birth again.
Scraps of joy, deluge of tears,
Endeavors, cares, through many years,
Burdens of error, burdens of guilt,
Burdens of burdens each one has built
Through years and centuries and aeons gone
As we pilgrims march on our journey long
From God the Beginning to God the End.

Heart-break, pain,
Outraged body, fag of brain.
Dissonance, dissolution, discord,
A bitter crying unto the Lord.
Hunger, anger, covetousness, lust,
The rule of might, the power of must,
The grinding of want, the gruelling of ill,
The piling of debts, ages paying the bill—
From God the Beginning to God the End.

Birth, death, pain!
What doth then remain?
Harmony, joy, strength,
Wrought in the aeons length,—
The heart of things burned to gold.
The soul of things,—Heaven unrolled
For God the Father to hear His thought
In music of spheres as yet unwrought
In God the Beginning and God the End.

THE SECRET OF SERENITY

Mistakes, misfortunes, mishaps, calamities and other unpleasant events sometimes happen to us quite against our will and efforts. But grief and sorrow are never the direct result of these happenings: they depend entirely on the attitude which we take toward them. The events may sometimes be entirely outside our control; but the attitude of mind which we take up with regard to them is entirely within our control. Let us therefore study how we may assert our supremacy over the happenings of the material and impermanent world, not so much by striving to control the changes which take place in the world about us, but by firmly grasping our own nature, the lower bodies of the personality, and making them respond more fully to the life of the true man within and less to the clamor of the world outside us, from which we can turn our thoughts away and which need not unduly disturb us.

While we have bodies in the three lower worlds of nature,—the physical, emotional and mental,—we will be affected by the impacts and jars of the material worlds upon our bodies. We can make these less violent and frequent if we adopt the life of the recluse, but we do not thereby develop our own powers of stability, fortitude and will to any so considerable extent as that which would be secured by strengthening our own bodies by exercising them against outside pressures and resistances and at the same time gaining more complete control over them.

Therefore the key to serenity lies within us and may be readily used. We may succeed, with

persevering and earnest practice, in maintaining some of ourself, of our consciousness, always in or near our inner center, where there can be nothing but serenity and bliss. And while the other part of us is struggling in the confusion of the outer world and is thereby subjected to the sway of the emotional forces of exhilaration and depression, pleasure and pain, we may hold fast to the truth that our true being is the inner Self of bliss and serenity. When we have succeeded to some degree to hold this firm thought and feeling throughout all that may happen to us in the outer world, then we are able to bear the strain and struggle of the life of the world without unduly yielding to its distracting forces.

The truth is that the reality of life is always that of peace and bliss. The chaos and turmoil found in the life of the outer senses is unreal, illusory, temporary, because the life of the outer senses is incomplete and not yet fully harmonised. Whenever we maintain the feeling of serenity we are resting upon reality and are living a true life; whenever we identify ourselves with the personality struggling among the energies of Nature we are shutting ourselves out from the greater truth and subjecting ourselves to a lesser truth which amounts to error and humiliation. Constantly, during our life in the personality, we are doing the one or the other. The steadfast maintainance of the strong feeling of serenity leads us quickly on along the evolutionary course; indulging in the dark feelings of doubt, dismay and despair make our progress slow and painful.

C. S.

WE MAKE OUR OWN UNIVERSE

Have you ever reflected upon the nature of the world as you see it? Is it a reality outside yourself, or is it something you build up within yourself? What powers, if any, have you to build the universe more as it should be?

Surely these are tremendous questions to meditate upon. They could not be adequately discussed in many large volumes, yet the effort is here to be made to give a brief sketch or outline of some very important facts about the universe as it is and as we see it. No student of life can well get along without striving continually to probe into the mysterious natures of the man and the world around him and the relations between them.

It is a fact that different men see the same surroundings somewhat alike and also invariably somewhat differently. It seems to be a logical conclusion from this fact, that there is some outer reality which acts upon men and, in their consciousness, gives rise to what they call the world. But it is also to be concluded that there are some fundamental differences in men themselves, which must account for the differences that exist between what men perceive of the outer world.

Let it be clearly understood that with our ordinary equipment of five senses of the physical body we can never really know the world outside. Our senses tell us something from the outer world, but they suppress vastly more. And more than this: what we seem to see of the outer world does not exist in the outer world, but in our own minds and consciousness. In other words, we never become conscious of external things

directly, but are always dealing with effects that are produced in our own consciousness.

How is it that we seem to see or perceive things as existing outside of ourselves when they really exist in our own consciousness? It is because these things are thought of by us as being outside ourselves. We project them mentally outwards to such parts of space as will in general result in the greatest practical material benefit and convenience. We have reason to believe that there *is* some outer reality, but what it is we can not know, at least not with our personal equipment of bodies and consciousness. When we say that there is a rock on our path about twenty feet away, we thereby pay attention to something which it is well to consider and avoid. But we never know what really lies on the path, for the path and rock and all else which we are conscious of exist solely in our own consciousness or thought world. It is probable that there is a reality corresponding to the path and rock,—a reality which is independent of ourselves, and which acts upon us and gives rise to our perception of the path and rock. But this absolute reality outside of us we can only speculate upon, and not know as it really is.

What takes place when we “see” the rock is something like this: A certain effect is produced upon the retina of our eye by what are regarded as vibrations of light in the ether which fills space. This action in the organ of sight immediately sends something like a telegraphic message over the nerve strands to the brain. Both the astral body and the mental body are also affected by the disturbance. The inner man himself takes

note of the disturbance, receiving it in his higher bodies and interpreting it by means of the fund of the accumulated results of his past experience. In his mind he forms an image or reproduction of the object from which the vibrations of light come to his eye. But he has no means of knowing whether or not this image is quite correct. He frequently finds that the images he makes are faulty, through the fact that when he accepts them as facts there results some trouble or in-harmony, so that he finds it necessary to correct the images by making them over again with the necessary modifications which will bring about a greater harmony in his relations to the world.

The reason that we are not aware that we are constantly engaged in making these mental reproductions of what seems to be in the world outside us is that we have to a very large extent learned to make them almost automatically, just as we have learned to do in such matters as breathing, digesting food and causing the blood to circulate. And if we give this problem some careful thought we must come to the realisation that the man must have passed through ages of experience, through many earth-lives, in order that he should have reached his present capacities and faculties of consciousness and mind. If we watch a baby in the process of learning how to adjust himself to the world around him, we may see an epitome, a brief recapitulation, of what the human ego has himself had to learn in full detail in the course of his evolution. And we ourselves, as egos, have had a similar training.

Out of all this we may conclude that the world as we see it, is made by ourselves in thought,

stimulated by external impacts and vibrations. We have evidently reached some degree of harmony between ourselves and the real world outside; but as we are frequently getting ourselves into difficulties, we can not as yet have reached a very high accuracy in reproducing the world outside in ourselves,—our images or thought-forms are imperfect and partial and not of sufficient variety to allow the world to be mirrored in our minds. What we see and know of the world we have made ourselves, and out of our isolated experiences. This explains to us why our world is so fragmentary and incomplete.

However, it does not seem that our evolution requires us actually to reproduce the world in our minds in its completeness. This would seem to be impossible. The real purpose of our earth-lives seems to be to attain certain powers of using our bodies, to gain wisdom and develop faculties of action. We are to learn to work with abstract thought rather than with the concrete images of external objects. We are to feel the universal life and not merely our personal lives. And we are to use the energies of divine will rather than those of personal desires.

How should we regard the outside world? It does not seem that it matters much whether we know what it really is and whether we can attach any kind of reality to it,—absolute or relative. But we should regard the world as something which is to train us and aid in our evolving. We can do something to help modify the world outside and make it more beautiful and helpful to evolution, but we can do still more in perfecting the world within us. Just as the outside world

helps to develop our reproduction or reflection of it, so it is perhaps reasonable to conclude that our own mental world is capable of influencing the outer world and changing it. At any rate we may be sure that the way in which we build up our own mental world will affect the way in which our fellow-men build up theirs.

It is well to spend some time frequently in considering that we are actually building a universe within ourselves, that it is of the highest importance that we shall well and truly lay the foundation stones of that marvelous edifice, and rear the superstructure squarely and uprightly according to careful plans. Our universe as we have it now will grow into wonderful stages in the future. It will never be utterly destroyed in its essence, or spiritual reality, though we shall frequently find it necessary to tear down and rebuild the outer material frame or scaffolding. In each earth-life we are called upon to build this lower universe anew. But the principles of world-building, of universal architecture, we will maintain constantly in our higher, spiritual bodies, and add to their completeness and perfection with each garnering of the results of our experience for each incarnation.

C. S.



AMERICA AND EGYPT

Nations are very much like individuals: they are born, they grow to maturity, they live for a period in full manhood, then a decline sets in, and there is a slow decay and death. But this is not the end: after a longer or shorter period of time they reappear in a new guise in another part of the globe, showing out the same national qualities and characteristics as before.

America is very young as a nation, it being only about one hundred and forty years since the Declaration of Independence. We need to remember this fact whenever we realise something of the childishness and undevelopment in solidity of character and responsibility in our land, which we often notice with regret. It takes several centuries, perhaps even some thousands of years, before a nation outgrows its youthfulness and takes a maturer view of itself and of its place in the world and the progress of the world.

But although America is young and somewhat childish in certain ways, we may be sure that she has had a rich experience and a long series of lives as a nation in the hoary ages of the past. If it were not so, how could the America of to-day be the child of promise for the future? How could she offer such wonderful opportunities for altruistic and idealistic thought, for unselfish courses of action in world politics and world movements? Are not these high spiritual qualities to be regarded as the fruits of long experience and much effort? It must be so, just as for the individual man these same qualities prove to the one who understands the laws of life and

evolution that the real man, the immortal ego, has had many previous lives on earth in which he developed those spiritual qualities.

If we study carefully the characteristics of the American nation we find many interesting facts which may help us to surmise something of its past. First of all, America is a very large nation, and it will probably grow to very great strength in prestige and population in the coming centuries of the world's life. Being now only in its infancy or early childhood, and yet having already some hundred million citizens, with the probability of comparatively unlimited growth ahead of it, it must be concluded that America is a reappearance or reincarnation of one of the very great nations of the past. Then comes the very interesting question, "What was probably the last national life of the America which we know to-day?"

To aid our study by the comparative methods let us recall that the British Empire is a reincarnation of the ancient Roman Empire, and that the Germans of to-day were the Phoenicians and especially the Carthaginians of olden times. Many strong facts can be marshalled to show the great similarities in national institutions and modes of thought and action of the Romans and the British, and of the Phoenicians and the Germans. The great war between the British and the Teutons to-day is in itself very largely the result of the bitter hate which existed between the ancient Romans and the Carthaginians, and which was not exhausted by their many wars. The Romans were not a deeply religious, but a practical, solid sort of people; so also are the British to-day. The genius of Rome lay in her capacity to apply

strong principles of law, order and government; and again the British Empire shows out the same genius. The Carthaginians were great traders; so are the Teutons to-day. They were very materialistic and had a streak of cruelty in them; and unfortunately for the world these qualities are also found in the Germans. The Phoenicians invented glass and dyes; to-day the Germans are the expert glass manufacturers and dye-makers of the world.

Let us now consider what were the characteristic national qualities of the ancient Egyptians. Their greatest contribution to the world was that of the recognition of the value of science, or ordered knowledge. Chemistry and astronomy were wonderfully developed sciences in Egypt. Medicine was also known and practiced with skill. The people of Egypt were hard-working, joyous, yet serious. They inculcated a high morality, especially honesty and sincerity. They were, as a rule, well rounded out in their qualities of character, and their national life was healthy and vigorous, and lasted many thousands of years.

These very same qualities we can now recognise in the Americans of to-day. They are versatile, with a great talent for invention; they are inclined to accuracy and scientific methods in all things, especially in agriculture. They, too, prize honesty and sincerity as leading virtues. They are not highly religious, but religion is taken as a matter of course.

The liberal arts, especially painting and sculpturing were highly cultivated in Egypt, and the people of America are similarly showing much appreciation of the fine arts and of things cultural.

In Egypt there flourished the Ancient Mysteries, in which facts of the higher worlds in which the personality lives, were revealed to both men and women of purity of heart. Their highest teachings centered around the hidden Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Men were taught to find that Light within their own hearts. As *Light on the Path* has it, "For within you is the light of the world, the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere." "When you have found the beginning of the way, the star of your soul will show its light; and, by that light, you will perceive how great is the darkness in which it burns." It is the light of the higher Self.

To-day, the Ancient Mysteries are represented by the great secret fraternal society of Freemasonry. And America, with her hosts of Freemasons, is pre-eminently the home of Masonry. It is not fanciful to trace back the teachings of Masonry and find their ancient source in the Mysteries of Egypt and of Greece. And though much of the original teachings may have become obscured and even lost, there is undoubtedly still much of the mystery of the hidden Light which may be found in modern Freemasonry.

And just as the lower mysteries were open to women as well as to men, in Egypt and in Greece, so there is reason to believe that in the coming centuries the Light of Masonry will be freely given to American women as well as to men, as even to-day there is in existence in America the Order of Co-freemasonry, into which women are

admitted on the same terms as men, and according to ancient and accepted form.

As the years roll by, we may see more clearly the genius of the national character of America and may more fully see that it is a reappearance of the ancient spirit of the Land of Khem.

C. S.

A SONG OF KABIR

O friend! hope for Him whilst you live, know whilst you live: for in life deliverance abides.

If your bonds be not broken whilst living, what hope for deliverance in death?

It is but an empty dream, that the soul shall have union with Him because it has passed from the body:

If He is found now, He is found then,

If not, we do but go to dwell in the City of Death.

If you have union now, you shall have it hereafter.

Bathe in the truth, know the true Guru, have faith in the true Name!

Kabir says: "It is the Spirit of the quest which helps; I am the slave of this Spirit of the quest.

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Kabir says: "Keep within you truth, detachment and love."

Kabir says: "He who has found both love and renunciation never descends to death."

Kabir says: "Brahma suits His language to the understanding of His hearer."

Translated by Rabindranath Tagore.

REINCARNATION LITERATURE

The Story of My Reincarnation, by "Zivola"; 335 pp. London, The Century Press. First published 1911.

No man who reads this work is likely to consider it as of no value or importance, or to deny to the author a remarkably keen insight into human life and its deeper philosophy. Were it not for the fact that the author frankly upholds reincarnation as a necessity in life, in order that human life shall have a meaning, and also that he very modestly and sincerely makes a tremendous claim as regards his own last incarnation, the book would doubtless have received much more attention than it has received.

In the preface the author begins by saying:

This book is the narrative of an experience, and the expression of a point of view. From the start it implies and predicates the existence of a something that is subject to reincarnation. In the nature of the case it is not presently possible inductively to verify this premiss. Whatever may be achieved in the future in this direction, no man, as yet, can prove or disprove on lines acceptable to Science, viz., inductively obtained proofs, either the existence or non-existence, for the matter of that, of a definite entity known as the Soul of Man. The experiences herein set forth may be subject to a variety of interpretations, varying with the standpoint of interpretation. It remains, none the less, an individual experience, however explicable. The point of view also indicated by the title and forming the premiss from whence and upon which the subject matter of the work is built, is likewise susceptible of a variety of shades of difference.

All who have given thought and study to these matters naturally tend to one or other of two extremes, or opposed schools of thought, as per their respective organisms. It will be sufficient for our purpose if we employ the

familiar terms Idealistic and Materialistic to distinguish these two opposed tendencies, although these are in turn tending towards a compromise or blending, as our insight into the constitution of the World, Mind, Matter, etc., extends and widens and becomes more subtle. Those who by nature incline more towards the side of the Ideal, are amongst those to whom the doctrines of an entity known as the Soul appeal most readily and who accept, provisionally at last, the premiss and postulate. On the other hand, they who by nature are so constituted as to incline more to the material or mechanical interpretation of the facts of life and nature, find great difficulty in accepting the premiss or postulate. Such, in effect, demand: Prove to us first of all that there is this entity which you predicate.

This demand, in the present state of scientific knowledge, leads at once to an *impasse*, for whilst the one party is unable, so far, to give the inductive objective proof called for by their opponents, the other party are equally unable to furnish scientific disproof. That being the case, it seems to me nothing but proper that in default of this scientific proof or disproof, leaving transcendental or personally acquired knowledge out of the question for the time being, the premiss on which and from whence this work arises, be accepted as a provisional premiss. If the near or remote future has in store the requisite positive proof or disproof, well and good, by that judgment let it stand or fall. Meanwhile, accord me your attention on that understanding, that judgment either way be held suspended, if that be possible for you. If the future expansion of positive knowledge does not substantiate either the premiss or any of the conclusions deduced herein, at least the personal experience recorded may have some suggestive value. If, on the other hand, the future bears within it substantial confirmation, as I for one believe will prove to be the case, well, we have antedated futurity—drawn a cheque on posterity for its acceptance and honouring. It goes without saying that positive knowledge on this point, the subject matter of the present work, would do more to transform the conduct and attitude of man, both individually and in his collective relations with his fellows, than any other discovery.

From the chapter called "First Principles," the following quotations have been selected:

. . whatever men's conceptions, beliefs and opinions may be of the ultimate cause of things and the ultimate destiny of mankind, of this we may be quite sure: Whatsoever Power expressive of the eternal reality back of phenomena has brought us into being, we cannot get over the fact that we find ourselves alive as sentient, variously endowed, beings. It is clear, therefore, that the Power which sent us here or which has brought us to our present stage of development, intends that we are to maintain our lives. It is further clear, that through pain and disease, whether bodily or socially, hints are given and a definite course of evolution laid down for us, along which we must journey under pains and penalties, for disobedience, or even ignorance, of the Natural Laws for our sustenance and guidance. That as in human law ignorance is no plea or justification for the breach of laws made ostensibly for the collective well-being, the maintainance of law and order, the rights of property, and so on, neither is ignorance of Natural Law conducive to immunity from their tremendous over-arching, preserving, and maintaining and disciplinary functions. That, to put it more plainly and bluntly still, before we can become Angels or what not that the future may have in store for us, we have first to live and play our parts as whole-hearted, whole-minded creatures of flesh and blood, as live men and women in the best and most virile sense of the words.

(p. 85)

The general transcendental government of this planet may be very well left to the operation of the Natural Laws concerned therewith; man must perforce leave that part of the business to the Supreme, Eternal, or Divine, howsoever we may conceive of it. It is obvious that we must get back to first principles, must overthrow the masses and mazes of cobwebby speculations derived from less informed ages and tinctured throughout with theological subtleties too frequently prompted and inspired by the strongly entrenched vested interests of religious and other organisations, we must increasingly get away from all this old lumber and go direct to the Book of Life and the World, where alone may be found the most trust-

worthy hints and rules for our guidance and government.
(p. 90).

Life, living, healthy living in all its manifold aspects and balanced harmonies, is nothing less than the expression of the Moral Law, and the quest of the Moral Ideal consists in the inner striving to reach this living harmony as between the parts and the whole. To pin the matter down to a fine issue, we may say that Moral right for the individual as for nations, is that which tends to promote the true welfare of such individual or nation—to allow the utmost scope to individual efforts and rights compatible with the similar rights of others, or the whole society of which the individual is a part; this implies cosmopolitical rights and duties, expanding as development proceeds, into cosmopolitan rights and duties; it does not imply or sanction a reversion of this natural growth process by putting the cart before the horse, but means that just as each individual has to work out its own salvation and make the most of its powers and endowments, so too must each nation or people; the higher in all grades irradiating the views of the lower by light drawn from the larger, wider, world views, to the end that steady and orderly progress may result. Moral wrong consists in the loss, destruction or absence of this balance between the one and the many, between individual and social rights and duties, between racial or national, and cosmopolitan rights and duties. The degree in which this equipoise is approached or receded from is the measure of a civilisation's, a nation's, or an individual's moral well-being. (pp. 91-92).

Much valuable material is found in the chapter entitled "Criticisms and Suggestions," such as:

Quickened Spirit means quickened human interests and sympathies, greater elasticity and responsiveness to environment; this again leads to increased intelligence and knowledge, resulting in increasing moralisation. It is clear, in the light of this outstanding fact, that Religion is, and can only be, one of several prime factors in the taming and education of man; one of the many means employed in effecting his advance in the scale of life and civilisation. These other prime factors are Govern-

ment, Science, Abstract Thought or Philosophy, and the general advance of the material and social conditions arising from the interactions of each and all of these prime factors with the religious co-ordinating, harmonising and conserving factor, with which we are immediately concerned. It is evident, also, that a two-fold process of moralisation has been in operation, namely, the pressure from without of the general environment acting in conjunction with the inner self-adaptiveness of religious organisations to such environment. (137-8).

There are many minds of the first order who look upon the Papacy as being in the stage of senile decay, whose life may still be prolonged for some centuries, having regard to its vast bulk, prestige, etc., but still inevitably doomed to comparatively speedy extinction. This need not necessarily be the case if readjustment is effected in season and the centre of gravity shifted from the superfluous service of God conceived on more or less anthropomorphic lines, to the service of man. If this be done we may expect a very extended period of living usefulness. . . (p. 152).

Surely it were the best form of worship and service of the Divine consciously to co-operate with the evolutionary forces now plainly discernible as being engaged, presumably under the direction of one Supreme Power, in an age-long struggle to lead mankind onwards and upwards. Further, it must be clear that so far as our view enables us to judge, this postulated Supreme Power is conditioned by the nature and quality of the materials through and upon which it works. If this indeed be so, then it must be obvious that we shall need to modify our conceptions of the Supreme, and in the light of the revelations accorded by our insights into the Book of Life and the world, cease bandying words such as omnipotent, all good, yet all powerful, and the like, in the varied and vain attempts to precisely define what to us poor mortals is and must be the indefinable. . (153-154).

The church as a corporate body dominated by the papacy being forced into a false position by its initial sophism, or more bluntly, falsehood, was compelled, as

it thought, in self-preservation, to adopt a bold and uncompromising attitude to the forces of light and progress, which ought to have been, and are indeed its natural allies, if it were animated by the right spirit. Thus, we find, that in a world of change it has attempted to build up a power, a world-wide organisation, with a fair measure of success for many centuries it must be admitted, which should bid the forces of change and time itself stand still. Is it any wonder that Nemesis is overtaking it, that its sins are finding it out, that its genuine influence and power over the lives of men is a diminishing quantity, despite all surface or numerical apparent evidences to the contrary? . . . (157-158).

Human progress and upliftment has only been possible by the constant flux of new generations providing new material for the moulding forces and influences at work behind the veil. Without the perpetual cleansing and renewing of the stream of life, the old generation giving place to the young in the natural order and sequence, there could be no progress, no radical improvement in the lot of mankind on earth. Roughly speaking, the human brain attains its maximum growth and weight at about the age of thirty-five; it then remains for a decade or so in equilibrium, as it were, before descending the slope of time to old age, and all too frequently, senility. The effect of Life, of living, regarded as an education for the individual, is the formation of habits; that which we do most frequently, we do most easily and are most prone to. By middle age, varying, say, from the ages of thirty-five to fifty, the overwhelming majority of men and women are largely creatures of habit; their minds are more or less fixed in grooves; they tend to become in very truth human machines. Youth is radical, progressive, enthusiastic, and largely under the spell of illusion. Happy are they who can prolong these characteristics and blend them with the riper wisdom. Old age is usually sober and dull, largely disillusioned, stagnant, and ultra-conservative. (160-161)

(To be continued)

FIELD NOTES

The annual meeting of Cleveland Group occurred at the home of Mrs. Megaw at 2:30 p. m., September 5. Eleven members were present; a larger number being out of town.

"With the exception of Christmas and May 30, public meetings were held each alternate week. Two evening stereopticon lectures were given: one in a private home, with about sixty present; the other in North Congregational Church, with about one hundred and sixty present. Our smallest attendance was seventeen. We have usually from twenty-five to thirty present. Refreshments are served by the hostess of the day. The Group owes much to its hospitable members. Many interesting questions are asked by strangers and open discussion has been a feature of each meeting.

"We have been fortunate in our outside speakers. Miss Emma Adams spoke on 'Life and Education in the Colorado Desert.'; Dr. Grumbine, lecturer and author, spoke on 'Reincarnation.' Dr. Barnard, also a well-known writer and speaker on social subjects, addressed us on 'Woman.' Miss Stella Hatch and Mrs. Dustin, known throughout the country for their humane work in the Cleveland Animal and Protective League, also addressed the Group.

"Good music has harmonised each meeting. Thanks to the work of Mrs. Bellows, much effective publicity work has been accomplished through newspapers. The two club editors have become our friends, read our literature and give us as much space as possible. Three times we have had the pictures of speakers for the following week in the Sunday papers. Twice we have received letters from out-of-town readers interested in our printed programs.

"The following officers were elected for 1917-8: president, Mrs. Mary I. Megaw; recording secretary, Marion Kirkeby; financial secretary, Mrs. Brown. The president appointed the following leaders: meditation, Mrs. Maltbie; music, Miss Dorothy Maltbie; reader of Object and definitions, Mrs. Crowley; organiser of centers to meet alternately with general meeting, Mrs. E. O. Peets; publicity, Mrs. Nellie Bellows.